

3 Key Learnings

1. **Container Metaphor:** Previous metaphors mentioned all share, to a greater or lesser extent, a conceptualization of organizations as a container within which communication occurs. Although the style and nature of communication occurring within the individual organization containers may differ, these approaches view the organization as an object that holds communication processes and influences the nature of those processes. Thus, each company is different with how it communicates. Students at Clarkson don't often speak to the President one on one, but the way our container is set up, floods us through classrooms and Professor offices. This metaphor however has been rejected starting about 20 years ago.
2. **Communicative Constitution of Organization (CCO):** A position in which the container metaphor is rejected. Instead, CCO scholars try to understand the complicated processes through which our interactions create, re-create, and change organizations. By moving to this emphasis on communication as a constitutive process, there is more of a focus of organizing (the verb) rather than organization (the noun). Thus there is a much more in depth viewing and analysis of *how* the organization becomes the communicative system that it is, and it is more of an intricate system of processes that create and recreate systems of meaning and understanding.
3. **Duality of structure and agency:** These two concepts are intertwined. Structures within an organization are the rules and resources. For Clarkson, class times are assigned times in which students are expected to be in a certain lecture hall, office hours are available from a certain time for students to get extra help, and student dorms are monitored by RA's and students are not allowed to drink, play loud music, or have guests over. But agency within the students and faculty of the university allow for some changes and leeway to happen regarding these rules and resources. Professors may cancel class, they may allow you to come in a early before office hours or stay later, and RA's may say that students are allowed to have guests as long as their roommates approve.